



August 2, 2000

## **NOTICE TO USDA HAM SUPPLIERS**

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will soon issue Announcement LS-75 to purchase a water-added ham, with a mild smoked flavor added. This past year, AMS conducted reviews on hams produced under current specification requirements and commercially produced hams. Based on the review, AMS is modifying its purchase program to provide for the purchase of a ham that is produced in a poly "cook-n-ship" casing. These hams must have mild smoke flavor. The hams will continue to be purchased from approved suppliers who have been approved through a Supplier Assessment and Quality System Certification program.

All manufacturers interested in becoming an approved supplier are required to submit the following for evaluation and approval:

- (1) A sample ham with the ingredient statement and Nutrition Facts panel that conforms to the attached Item Description and Checklist of Requirements, dated August 2000. (All samples must arrive at zero degrees or less);
- (2) A written description of the their production processes (which must include procedures for internal review and control of nonconforming product and re-sampling procedures), raw materials used, and ingredient statement; and
- (3) A documented quality control program that addresses contractor's quality assurance measures to ensure compliance with the Item Description and Checklist of Requirements.

The sample ham and documentation must be sent to the attention of Contracting Officer, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 2610-South Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW.; Washington, D.C. 20250, for evaluation prior to bidding.

To become an approved supplier and be eligible to bid on the first Invitation, the three items listed above must be submitted prior to August 18, 2000. This will allow sufficient time to evaluate the product, the quality control program, the written description of the production process, and conduct the required supplier assessment.

The criteria for evaluation of the product sample is under the Quality Assurance section of the Item Description and Checklist of Requirements dated August 2000. After the sample and the above documents are evaluated, an AMS audit team will perform an in-plant assessment of the facilities, processes, and quality control program used to produce the sample ham. The assessment consists of an onsite pre-award audit to determine the supplier's ability to meet contractual requirements. The audit will include, but is not

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## **Notice to Trade**

### **Page 2**

limited to, a thorough evaluation of the potential contractors' and subcontractors' facilities, equipment, procedures, and all referenced documents. Documentation must support the Item Description and Checklist of Requirements. A detailed review of purchasing, receiving, production, quality control, inventory, shipping records, and interviews with management and production personnel will be conducted.

Following approval of the sample, production process, and the documented quality control program, the supplier will become an approved supplier and be eligible to bid. The evaluation of the product sample, the applicable documentation, and the notification to supplier will take approximately five working days. Suppliers with samples meeting the applicable criteria should contact Mark Bradley, the Quality Manager, on (202) 720-1124 to setup a supplier assessment audit.

Please direct any procurement questions to Nancy Hubbell of the Commodity Procurement Branch on (202) 720-2650.

/s/Robert L. Leverette

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